

international norms that will advance the prosperity of the Turkmen people. Turkmenistan is committed to strengthening the rule of law and political pluralism, including free and fair elections for parliament and the presidency in accordance with international standards and the constitution of Turkmenistan, as planned for 1999 and 2002, respectively. Turkmenistan has invited the OSCE to open an office in Ashgabat, and the United States pledges its active support. President Clinton welcomed these steps to advance democracy and human rights.

The United States recognizes the challenges facing Turkmenistan in assuring its national security and respects its neutrality. The United States encourages Turkmenistan's further integration into emerging European security structures, including NATO's Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. The Presidents support enhanced security cooperation, which will be explored in a bilateral security dialogue to be initiated this summer.

The two Presidents exchanged opinions on important international issues. They discussed the serious threats posed by international terrorism, narcotics trafficking, international crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They committed their governments to explore ways to expand cooperation in combating these threats to regional and global security.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on the
Helsinki Joint Statement on Nuclear
Forces Reduction**

April 23, 1998

Dear _____:

As required by section 1229 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105-85), attached is a report on the Helsinki Joint Statement.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Strom Thurmond, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; and Floyd D. Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on National Security.

**Remarks at a Reception for
Supporters of the Omnibus Budget
Reconciliation Act of 1993**

April 23, 1998

Thank you. Many of you have said to me tonight that this was like a reunion. I hope you have loved being here and enjoyed seeing each other, but you couldn't be nearly as happy to be here as Hillary and Al and I are to have you here.

And I just want to say—there are a couple of other people I would like to mention. There are so many people in the administration who were crucial to this, but I want to add my thanks to Mack McLarty and acknowledge Gene Sperling. I want to thank Larry Summers, our Deputy Treasury Secretary; and in absentia, I'd like to thank Laura Tyson, Bob Rubin, Leon Panetta, and our friend Lloyd Bentsen, who's been a little under the weather, and I hope we will never forget him.

I never will forget when he came down to Arkansas before I got sworn in, and in that sort of dour, Texas, patrician way of his, and said, "Now, if we don't reduce the deficit by at least \$500 billion, interest rates will not go down and the market will not go up." [Laughter] And then they proceeded to tell me how hard it would be to do that, based on accepted scoring techniques. And then we proceeded to do what we all did.

And I want to thank you because it was so easy, there was no arm twisting involved. [Laughter] Not a deal made, it was all a high-flown sort of thing. [Laughter] I'm so indebted to all of you. I would like to thank especially Bob Kerrey for never releasing the contents of our last telephone conversation. [Laughter] And I don't know if he's here tonight, but I invited him—I'd like to say a special work of thanks, too, to Roger Altman, who ran our war room, which helped us to keep that non-pressure up. [Laughter] But it was a wonderful experience.

I, too, would like to personally thank George Mitchell, who has done a magnificent job in the Irish peace process; and Tom Foley for his work—[applause]—and I want to thank Speaker Foley, too, who is doing a great job in Japan. And I want to join what has already been said about Senator Moynihan and Chairman Rostenkowski. In different ways, they were both absolutely indispensable.

You should take a lot of pride at this golden moment in America's history, with the economy up and our social problems down and the deficit going to zero. All of you know that it's one of those rare moments, as the Vice President said, where you can literally say that this has happened because of the energy and spirit of the American people, but also because we passed an economic plan that liberated that energy and spirit.

In every home where wages are rising and people now have jobs, in every town which was down and is now up, there are millions of people who are in your debt. And I did mostly just want you all to be in this room so I could say on their behalf, thank you, and God bless you for what you did.

I want you to think a little bit about what this plan represented. One of the reasons I ran for President was it seemed to me that everyone knew that something bad was wrong, but no one was prepared to do what it took to change it; and that we had to replace drift and deadlock with a real sense of momentum and purpose.

In the process of passing this plan, you set a new direction for our country, forged a new identity for our party, and helped to revitalize and redefine the whole idea of progressive government for a new century and a new economy.

You know, we knew we had to bring deficits down, and they were enormous. But we also knew that we could do it, and we had to do it, and still invest in our future—in education, in health care, in tax cuts for small businesses, and for 15 million of the hardest-pressed working people. Because you doubled that earned-income tax credit in that economic plan, which was a painful thing—it required us to do a lot of other things that were exceedingly difficult—you need to know, tonight when you go to bed, I want

you to think about this, there are 2.2 million children who are not in poverty because you did that. And you should be very proud of that.

When you replaced trickle-down economics with invest-and-grow economics and let this economy spring to life, you took a situation where we had a deficit with \$290 billion and brought it down before the bipartisan balanced budget plan, which I also supported and believed in. But before that plan saved one red cent, the deficit had already been brought down by more than 90 percent—93 percent, to be exact. The deficit used to have 11 zeros; now it will have no zeros. In fact, we're going to be in surplus.

In '92 the unemployment rate was 7.5 percent; now it's the lowest in 25 years. In '92 new jobs were scarce; now there are 15 million more. Business investment has increased, more than any—at a rate higher than any time since the Kennedy administration. From '81 to '92 real wages fell. Last year the average paycheck of the American worker rose 2.9 percent, the fastest growth in more than 20 years.

Soon we will mark the longest peacetime expansion in our history. Merrill Lynch says there has never been a better economy. Goldman Sachs says it's the best economy America has ever had. And just as important, maybe, over the long run, when you took this vote and weathered the consequences, you began to restore the faith of the American people in their Government.

Americans are always given to a healthy distrust of government, and that's good. A lot of our Constitution is structured to prevent the abuse of power, and well it should be. But for too long, this skepticism risked running into a sort of corrosive cynicism. A lot of people had become convinced by the time I ran for President that the Government couldn't organize a two-car parade—[laughter]—and that everything we did that looked bold led to unintended consequences, most of which were bad.

Well, the '93 economic plan worked, and it worked for the reasons we said it would work. So in a way, with that law, you actually enacted a law of intended consequences in American public life and, therefore, you helped to lift the public's appreciation for

what we could do through representative government.

The vote you cast was probably among the most difficult ever cast by Members of the Congress of the United States in the history of our Republic. You had withering partisan criticism. I can only ask you to remember the people you helped, the families you strengthened, the opportunity you created.

Let me just give you three examples. Karen Shephard represented a district in the only State where I ran third in 1992. [*Laughter*] But because she took the vote she did, those people, notwithstanding the fact that sometimes they stray in their political judgment—[*laughter*—have an unemployment rate of 3.1 percent. Karan English, because of the courage you showed in 1993, Arizona has the fastest job growth in its history. And Marjorie Mezvinsky, because you laid down your seat, your county has the fastest job growth of any county in the entire State of Pennsylvania. Unemployment has dropped by 25 percent. And it gave me a great deal of pleasure to have you sit with the First Lady at the State of the Union Address this year when I announced that. Because of the vote all of you cast, we would in fact, balance the budget years ahead of schedule. [*Applause*] Thank you.

In “Profiles in Courage,” President Kennedy wrote these words: “Democracy means much more than popular government and majority rule, much more than a system of political techniques to flatter or deceive powerful blocs of voters. A democracy that has no moment of individual conscience in a sea of popular rule is not worthy to bear that name.”

Karen, Karan, and Marjorie, to all the rest of you, every one of you has a story. And I only wish I could tell them all tonight. The 103d Congress was chock-full of profiles in courage. And when you add them all up, by the narrowest of margins, repeatedly, they led to the first balanced budget in 30 years, and American economic renaissance, and a resurgent conviction on the part of our people that together we can solve our problems and seize our opportunities, and do great things; that our old-fashioned Government that Mr. Washington and his friends helped to start still works in this new-fangled age

if it has the right people willing to do the right things at the right time.

It is altogether a monument to your determination, your conscience, and overall, your love of your country. So on behalf of your country, again I say, thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:54 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers Laura D’Andrea Tyson; former Director of the Office of Management and Budget Leon E. Panetta; former Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen; former Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Roger Altman; former Senator George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Thomas S. Foley; and former chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Dan Rostenkowski.

Remarks Announcing the Resignation of Counselor to the President and Special Envoy for the Americas Thomas F. McLarty and an Exchange With Reporters

April 24, 1998

The President. Last week, at the Summit of the Americas in Santiago, I saw again the profound change in the very character of the relationships between the United States and our neighbors to the south and the start of a true partnership based on mutual respect, mutual trust, and mutual reward.

Two quiet revolutions were the catalysts for this change. The first, of course, was the quiet revolution of democracy and open markets in the Americas. The second quiet revolution was Mack McLarty, our Special Envoy to Latin America, who helped all of us to realize that the Americas must become a cornerstone of our prosperity and security for the 21st century.

Mack has made over 40 trips to the Americas since he became my Special Envoy. He has earned the trust and respect, the friendship and affection of leaders from the Caribbean to Central America, from Canada to South America, who value his extraordinary combination of integrity and intellect, ability, and civility. He helped to change the way